

**Remarks/Arguments:**

Claims 1-29 are pending and stand rejected.

By this Amendment, claims 1-9, 13-19, 21-24 and 28-29 are amended and new claims 30 and 31 are added.

No new matter has been added by the claim amendments and new claims. Support for the claim amendments and new claims can be found throughout the original specification and, for example, in original claim 7.

**Rejection of Claims 1-29 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shigehashi (JP 2003-046539)**

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

**Claim 1**

Claim 1 is directed to an inner-router adjustment method, and recites

acquiring the router status information and calculating priorities to decide whether the respective router device is to have an operational status in which the respective router device is placed in operation based on the router status information, the router status information including at least line status information indicating a status of the physical link to the respective router device so that the router devices belonging to the common sub-network operate as one virtual router device.

That is, the calculated priorities are based on at least line status information (i.e., which indicates status of physical links to the respective router device).

**Shigehashi Reference**

Shigehashi discloses several formula (i.e. formulas 1-5) for the calculation of priority for selecting a master router. Each of these formulas, however, is based on the loading of the particular router device. For example, formula 1 of Shigehashi is based on CPU activity ratio W. (See Shigehashi at paragraph [0039] and [0040]). Shigehashi is silent regarding anything related to the use of priorities based on line

status information (i.e., which indicates a status of a physical link to the respective router device).

Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Shigehashi for at least the above-mentioned reasons.

**Claims 2, 8, 9, 15 and 19**

Claims 2, 8, 9, 15 and 19, which include similar but not identical features to those of claim 1, are submitted to patentably distinguish over Shigehashi for at least similar reasons to those of claim 1.

**Claims 3-7, 10-14, 16-18, and 20-29**

Claims 3-7, 10-14, 16-18, and 20-29, which include all of the limitations their respective independent claims, are submitted to patentably distinguish over Shigehashi for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims.

**New Claims 30 and 31**

New claims 30 and 31, which include all of the limitations of claim 1, are submitted to patentably distinguish over Shigehashi for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New claim 30 includes a patentable distinction beyond that of claim 1, namely: "the line status information further includes battery capacity information that indicates a remaining battery capacity of the respective router device such that the calculated priorities are based on the line status information and the **remaining battery capacity of the respective router device.**" (emphasis added)

New claim 31 also includes a patentable distinction beyond that of claim 1, namely: "the line status information indicates at least one of: (i) a transmission speed of the physical link, (ii) an error condition for the physical link, or (iii) a degree of congestion on the physical link, the physical link being different from any router device."

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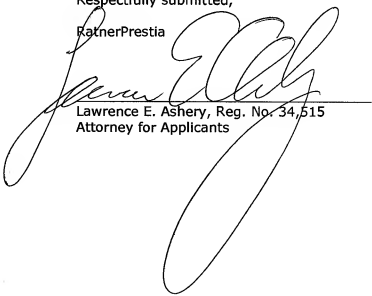
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**Conclusion**

In view of the claim amendments, new claims and remarks, Applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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